

LITTLE FALLS BRANCH BRIDGE
Clara Barton Parkway, spanning Little Falls Branch
Glen Echo Vicinity
Montgomery County
Maryland

HAER No. MD-99

HAER
MD
16-GLENECH,
5-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

LITTLE FALLS BRANCH BRIDGE George Washington Memorial Parkway HAER No. MD-99

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I. INTRODUCTION

Location: Clara Barton Parkway milepost 4.77, 4.5 miles from Interstate 495; carries Clara Barton Parkway over Little Falls Branch, a tributary to the Potomac River in Montgomery County within George Washington Memorial Parkway.

FHWA Structure No.: 3300-037P.

Date of Construction: 1961.

Type: Prestressed concrete girder bridge.

Designer: Bureau of Public Roads engineers with approval from National Park Service.

Present Owner: National Capital Region, National Park Service.

Present Use: Carries non-commercial vehicular traffic.

Significance: Built as part of the Maryland segment of the George Washington Memorial Parkway.

Project Information: Documentation of the George Washington Memorial Parkway and Clara Barton Parkway was undertaken as a multi-year project by the Historic American Buildings Survey and the Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), a combined division of the National Park Service, Robert Kapsch, Chief. The project was sponsored by the Park Roads Program of the National Park Service, John Gingles, Deputy Chief, Engineering and Safety Services Division. The Project Supervisor was Sara Amy Leach, HABS Historian. Bridge reports were prepared by Elizabeth M. Nolin (1988); Michael P. Kucher (University of Delaware, 1993); and Jennifer P. Wentzien (University of Washington, 1994).

HABS Report No. VA-69 prepared by Timothy Davis (University of Texas) provides an overview history of the entire parkway project. Jack E. Boucher and Jet Lowe produced the large-format photographs. The Washington-based summer 1994 documentation team was headed by landscape architect Tim Mackey (Harvard University, Graduate School of Design).

II. HISTORY

The Little Falls Branch Bridge is one of several bridges built in the 1960s as part of the Maryland segment of the George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP). In 1989 this segment of the GWMP was renamed the Clara Barton Parkway. The bridge passes over Little Falls Branch, at tributary of the Potomac River and is located near the Dalecarlia Reservoir.

This structure is one of three prestressed girder bridges located along the Clara Barton Parkway and constructed in the early 1960s.¹ While earlier bridges had native stone facing, the absence of applied ornament is typical of park and parkway bridges of the 1950s and 1960s. William Haussmann of the National Park Service is cited as the architectural designer.

Description

The Little Falls Branch Bridge is a single span prestressed concrete bridge supported on reinforced concrete abutments. Abutments and wing walls rest on spread footings. An overflow structure is cast into the east abutment. The abutments are skewed 50 degrees to the bridge deck. Four prestressed I-beams and two reinforced concrete fascia beams span 59'. The concrete deck carries two 16' lanes and two 5'-6" wide cantilevered walkways. The overall width is 38.5'. The bridge railings are 2'-10" high and use 5" diameter extra-strong steel pipe.

III. SOURCES

U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Public Roads. Plans for Proposed Project 100A5. 1957.

Microfiche reductions of original construction drawings on file at the Bridge Inspection office of the Eastern Federal Lands Division, Federal Highway Administration, Sterling Virginia.

U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Public Roads. "Final Construction Report, George Washington Memorial Parkway, Project 100A5." Unable to locate this report at the remote storage facility of the Eastern Federal Lands Division, Federal Highway Administration, Sterling, VA.

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. "Structure Inventory and Appraisal Sheet - Structure No. 3300-037P." 6/01/93.

U.S. Department of the Interior, Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), No. VA-69, "George Washington Memorial Parkway," 1994. Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

¹See Carderock Overpass (HAER No. MD-92) and Cabin John Overpass (HAER No. MD-94).